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It has been well said by Mr. G. A. Macfarren, in one of his articles on the "Music of the English Church," that the singing of hymns to the popular tunes of the day, "has been acted upon with wanton extravagance, reckless alike of all effect and of all consequence, save that of giving a passive pleasure to the vulgar crowd, and of gaining a momentary popularity for the local practiser of the system." Here, indeed, is an attempt to escape from the dullness of which we have been speaking; but let us take another extract from the same article before we comment upon this significant fact. "The tune of Miss Ann Catley's Hornpipe, so called because that favorite of the public was wont to dance to it, was originally sung by the same versatile performer in Kane O'Hara's dramatic piece, *The Golden Pippin*, as a song named 'The Guardian Angel;' this name gave it sufficient odour of sanctity for Madan, the popular preacher of the Lock Chapel, to include it in his collection of hymn-tunes, where it first figured under the less pious and far less significant title of 'Helmsley.'" Mr. Macfarren afterwards speaks of the tune called "Rousseau's dream," which was a dance in a comic opera; and "Pilgrims of the Night," an unmitigated French dance tune, as two good specimens of secular airs which have been pressed into the service of the Church. Could more positive proof than this be adduced, that the confiding members of a congregation (however rigid they may be in their uneducated notions upon religious music) will listen most devoutly to secular strains, provided only that they have been properly sanctified by a sacred title.

But it is not by thus desecrating the Church that we would desire to introduce music of a less lugubrious character than we have alluded to in the early part of our remarks. We know that secular tunes are usually inseparably united in the mind with secular ideas; and compositions therefore written to sacred words, should always spring from the mind of one who (like the grand old church composers) can glorify in notes the faith in which he believes.

But our object here is not so much to define what music is admissible for our Protestant Church service, as to speak of that which should be fitly introduced into the family circle. Presuming on the ignorance of the public, a large trade has lately been carried on in what may be called "Sabbath music;" and in the interest of true art, as well as true religion, it is good that this subject should be properly ventilated. We can, of course, have no objection to the works of the true writers for the Church being included in such a selection; but when we find that the majority of these are garbled portions of movements, taken at random from various composers; short pianoforte pieces, with interpolations introduced by the bungling "arrangers;" and airs, which by some sacred title, are made to look religious; with vapid and tedious variations, (so that vanity and devotion may be simultaneously appealed to) we think it high time that a warning voice should be raised against a system so pernicious in its effects. The best specimens of real sacred music lie around us all, and are to be purchased at a price within the reach of every one. Why, then, have recourse to bundles of heterogeneous materials labelled "Sunday Firesides," or "Holy Recreations?" Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Mendelssohn, and many others, have supplied us with works which require no editorial dress-

ing up to fit them for the "firesides" of all who feel that religious words can only be united to religious music by those chosen few, who are impressed with the sacredness of their trust.

But it would be good, if possible, to widen our collection of such music by the occasional introduction of compositions, which, if not named "sacred" by the composer, are no less capable of producing the truest feelings of devotion. We agree with Mr. Macfarren (as we have already said) in his assertion, that the words to which music has been originally set, will intrude themselves upon the mind whenever the notes are heard; but we particularly wish to enforce the fact that instrumental compositions have no such character originally stamped upon them. It is true that certain "social surroundings" may have clung to many of them; but, abstractedly, the character of a composition is determined by the feeling it expresses. Some of the slow movements of Beethoven's Sonatas, many of Bach's works, and several of Mendelssohn's "*Lieder ohne worte*," for instance, are truly religious; in proof of which Gounod has written an "Ave Maria" to Bach's first prelude, in C. The admission of such works as these will tend materially to elevate the tone of Sunday evening music. Our opening remarks as to the absurdity of supposing that anything sacred must be absolutely dull, will, we are sure, be endorsed by all who have true religion in their hearts; and to such only we appeal. The subject has the deepest interest; and, to those who can calmly reflect upon it, the truth must be obvious, that as a man is not necessarily religious because he is serious—so music is not necessarily religious because it is doleful.

HER MAJESTY'S OPERA.

THE general execution of *Faust* at this theatre has scarcely satisfied the admirers of Gounod's music; for although Madlle. Nilsson looks the part of *Margherita* to perfection, there is a coldness in her delivery of much of the impassioned vocal music which renders the part colourless to those who are thoroughly imbued with the characteristics of Goethe's heroine. Signor Ferensì, too, has no claim whatever to be admitted as a first tenor in a lyrical theatre of the highest class: and his assumption of the arduous part of *Faust* is too great a trial to the forbearance of so exacting an audience. The revival of *Il Flauto Magico* has been a most welcome one, since it gave us the opportunity of hearing Madlle. Titiens, as *Pamina*, Madlle. Nilsson, as *Astrijammante*, and Madlle. Sinico as *Papagena*. Madlle. Nilsson, although suffering from indisposition, was encoired in the air "*Va ritorla*," the last movement of which she repeated with such obvious difficulty that no person could have been surprised at her being compelled to omit her second song altogether. When will audiences cease to exact, or singers cease to respond to, a tax so thoroughly absurd and obnoxious? A notice of the performance of *Il Flauto Magico* would be incomplete, were we not to mention the excellent acting and singing of Mr. C. Lyall, as *Monostatos*.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

THE revival of Gounod's opera *Romeo e Giulietta* at this establishment has had the effect of increasing our admiration of Madlle. Patti's *Juliet*, and our wonder at the absurdity of Signor Mario being put forward in a part which he is obviously unable to sing. Respecting the chorus, we have already had a word to say on more than one occasion; and a letter from a correspondent in our present number, shows that we by no means stand alone in our estimate of the slovenly manner in which the

choral music is usually presented to the audience. Amongst the new comers we must make favourable mention of Madame Rey-Balla, who, although her voice sounds somewhat worn, has made a good impression as *Valentine*, in the *Huguenots*, and as *Margherita*, in Gounod's *Faust*. Signor Chelli, a nervous tenor, but with a good person and manner, may yet do more than he could hope to do as the *Duke*, in *Rigoletto*. Madlle. Lucca departed, as usual, somewhat abruptly; and the long-promised *Domino Noir* was produced, with Madame Lemmens-Sherrington and Signor Naudin in the principal parts. The season closed on the 23rd ult., with a patch-work entertainment, for the benefit of Madlle. Adelina Patti, the most loyal and dependable artist of Mr. Gye's company.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

THE extra complimentary Concert given to the subscribers at St James's Hall, on the 17th ult., proved one of the very best performances of the season, in spite of the disappointment felt by the numerous audience at the absence of Madlle. Titiens, from indisposition. The "Jupiter" Symphony of Mozart, placed first in the programme, was played with a delicacy and precision perfectly delightful to listen to; and the composition itself, in these days of musical mysticism, seemed quite refreshing. Professor Bennett's "Fantasia Overture" illustrative of *Paradise and the Peri*, is one of those genuine pieces of pure writing springing from a school of composition which can never die. The instrumentation is charming throughout; and the Philharmonic Society, for which in 1862 it was expressly composed, would do well to give its subscribers and the public, more frequent opportunities of hearing it. Mendelssohn's "Italian Symphony," very excellently performed, was an attractive feature in the programme; and Weber's "Jubilee" Overture served to play the audience out of the hall, although all musicians know that it is deserving of a better office. Mr. Charles Hallé's performance of Beethoven's pianoforte Concerto in G, was, as usual, faultlessly correct in mechanism, and unmarked by any startling reading which could offend the most fastidious listener. He introduced Beethoven's own cadences, and mastered their difficulties with the utmost ease. In consequence of Madlle. Titiens' absence, Madame Trebelli-Bettini gave the Page's song from *Les Huguenots*, and "Di tanti palpiti," and was received in both with much applause. Madlle. Nilsson (although obviously suffering from indisposition) sang Beethoven's Scena, "Ah perfido," with wonderful effect, rousing the audience to perfect enthusiasm, and proving that she is fully capable of sustaining as high a place in the Concert-room as she already occupies on the operatic stage. Mr. Santley gave a fine rendering of Handel's song from *La Resurrezione*, "O voi dell' Erebo," (of which we spoke on the occasion of his performance of it at the late Handel Festival) and also sang with equal effect the air, "Sei vendicata," from *Dinorah*. Throughout the evening Mr. Cusins conducted with a steadiness and decision of purpose which cannot be too highly commended.

GALLERY OF ILLUSTRATION.

THE entertainments provided at this establishment appeal more to the dramatic, than the musical, critic; and little therefore can be said by us on the piece lately produced, called *Inquire Within* (written by Mr. Burnand), than that it afforded Mr. and Mrs. German Reed and Mr. John Parry the usual opportunities of appearing in a variety of characters, and that they supported them with their accustomed ability. The few songs introduced (the composition of Mr. German Reed), although without much pretension, are pleasing and well adapted for the purpose for which they are written. A good word should be said for Miss Annie Sinclair, who sings and acts with a grace and intelligence which augurs well for the future. Mr. John Parry's excellent musical sketch, illustrative of a public dinner, is still received, as it deserves, with the most unqualified marks of approval.

A CONCERT was given by Mr. John Thomas, the eminent harpist, at the Hanover Square Rooms, on the 24th June; when, as usual, a band of harps formed a prominent attraction in the programme. Mr. John Thomas's performance gave the utmost satisfaction to a numerous audience, especially in several of his own compositions. He was also highly successful in duets with Mr. J. B. Chatterton and Mr. T. H. Wright. Miss M. Watts, Miss Edith Wynne, Miss Elena Angèle, M. Jules Lefort, and Mr. Lewis Thomas were the vocalists; and special mention must be made of three excellent songs, the composition of the Concert-giver, "A Maiden sat upon a rock," (sung by Miss Watts), "Home and Love" (given by Mr. Lewis Thomas), and the "Guardian Spirit" (very effectively rendered by Miss Elena Angèle). Mr. Benedict conducted.

THE Concert of Mr. Charles Gardner, the pianist, which took place at the Hanover Square Rooms, on the 8th ult., contained an attractive programme, although we think that in these days of "Recitals," the Concert-giver might have fairly given himself more to do without subjecting himself to the charge of vanity. What he played, however, he played well; his performance including movements from Corelli's Pastoral Concerto, Mendelssohn's Duet (Op. 17), for pianoforte and violoncello (in which he was joined by M. Pague), and two light compositions of his own. The principal vocalists were Miss Anna Jewell, Miss Robertine Henderson, Mrs. Osborne Williams, Mr. Cummings, Mr. Wallworth, and M. Jules Lefort. He was also assisted by Mr. Richard Blagrove (concertina) and Mrs. Richard Blagrove (Miss Freeth) pianoforte.

THE City Musical and Elocutionary Society gave an Entertainment, under the management of its director, Mr. F. M. Wenborn, on the 16th ult., at the Albion Hall, where the meetings are held on Friday evenings. Miss Mabel Brent, Mr. Montem Smith, Mr. Frank Percival, Mr. A. J. Hubbard, and Mr. B. Trotman were the solo vocalists, and gave entire satisfaction in the music allotted to them. The choruses in the *Macbeth* music, &c., were carefully sung by members of the Society; and in the course of the evening several recitations were excellently rendered by members of the elocution class. The hall was crowded; and much gratification was expressed at the result of the first entertainment given by the Society in its new form.

An Organ was opened on Sunday, the 19th ult., at the church of St. Philip the Evangelist, Camberwell. It is built by Bevington, of Soho Square, and is a very fine toned instrument. Mr. John Orton (organist of the church) presided at the organ, and played the accompaniments to the services, and his own voluntaries, in a very excellent manner.

THE admissions to Herr Hagemeyer's Concert, on the 1st ult., arrived at our office on the 2nd. We scarcely see the necessity for the Concert-giver to tell us why the faculty of music was bestowed upon mankind, on the fly-leaf of his programme; nor do we find that his desire to "promote musical progress" is carried out in the selection of compositions at his Concert. Young students should have good music placed before them; and if Herr Hagemeyer be desirous, as he says, of soliciting the co-operation "of all persons interested in the progress of musical education," he must bear to be told that presenting two tickets of admission to every purchaser of his "Grand Valse de Concert," is scarcely an effectual method of furthering his object.

MISS AGNES ZIMMERMANN was lately summoned to Windsor Castle; and had the honour of performing several pianoforte pieces before H.R.H. Princess Louis, of Hesse, the Princess Louise, Prince Leopold, &c. By desire of the royal party, she played some of her own compositions, and also her lately published arrangements from the works of Bach.